

Alderman's Court

Legal Authorization

Alderman's Courts are authorized by the town charters of their respective municipalities.

Legal Jurisdiction

The jurisdiction of an Alderman's Court is limited to misdemeanors, traffic offenses, parking violations, and minor civil matters. The specific jurisdiction of each court varies with the town charter (which is approved by the General Assembly). Appeals are taken de novo to the Court of Common Pleas within 15 days of trial.

Geographic Organization

Alderman's Courts have jurisdiction only within their own town limits. There were eight active Alderman's Courts at the end of 2001, two in New Castle County and six in Sussex County. When a town is without a court or an alderman for any period of time, its cases are transferred to the nearest Justice of the Peace Court.

Aldermen

The selection, number, tenure and qualifications of aldermen are determined by the towns themselves. Some require lawyers while others choose private citizens. A few aldermen serve full-time, while some are part-time.

ALDERMAN COURT						
Caseload Summary Fiscal Year 2002 - Total Cases						
	Pending** 6/30/2001	Filings	Dispositions	Pending 6/30/2002	Change In Pending	% Change In Pending
New Castle County						
Newark	5,053	10,413	10,278	5,188	+135	+ 2.7%
Newport	2,742	4,817	5,390	2,169	-573	- 20.9%
Sussex County						
Bethany Beach	0	3,394	3,394	0	0	-----
Delmar	231	447	421	257	+ 26	+ 11.3%
Dewey Beach	0	1,533	1,533	0	0	-----
Laurel	114	1,935	1,821	228	+114	+100.0%
Ocean View	0	0	0	0	0	-----
Rehoboth Beach	53	426	467	12	- 41	- 77.4%
State	8,193	22,965	23,304	7,854	-339	- 4.1%
Caseload Summary Fiscal Year 2002 - Criminal Cases*						
	Pending** 6/30/2001	Filings	Dispositions	Pending 6/30/2002	Change In Pending	% Change In Pending
New Castle County						
Newark	360	1,817	1,789	388	+28	+ 7.8%
Newport	0	0	0	0	0	-----
Sussex County						
Bethany Beach	0	193	193	0	0	-----
Delmar	60	9	4	65	+ 5	+ 8.3%
Dewey Beach	0	789	789	0	0	-----
Laurel	28	250	267	11	-17	-60.7%
Ocean View	0	0	0	0	0	-----
Rehoboth Beach	21	170	186	5	-16	-76.2%
State	469	3,228	3,228	469	0	0.0%
Caseload Summary Fiscal Year 2002 - Traffic Cases*						
	Pending** 6/30/2001	Filings	Dispositions	Pending 6/30/2002	Change In Pending	% Change In Pending
New Castle County						
Newark	4,693	8,596	8,489	4,800	+107	+ 2.3%
Newport	2,742	4,817	5,390	2,169	-573	- 20.9%
Sussex County						
Bethany Beach	0	3,201	3,201	0	0	-----
Delmar	171	438	417	192	+ 21	+ 12.3%
Dewey Beach	0	744	744	0	0	-----
Laurel	86	1,685	1,554	217	+131	+152.3%
Ocean View	0	0	0	0	0	-----
Rehoboth Beach	32	256	281	7	- 25	- 78.1%
State	7,724	19,737	20,076	7,385	-339	- 4.4%

*The unit of count for criminal and traffic cases is the charge. For example, a defendant with three charges disposed of is counted as three dispositions.

**Pending amended for Newport, Rehoboth Beach, and State.

Source : Alderman Court, Administrative Office of the Courts.

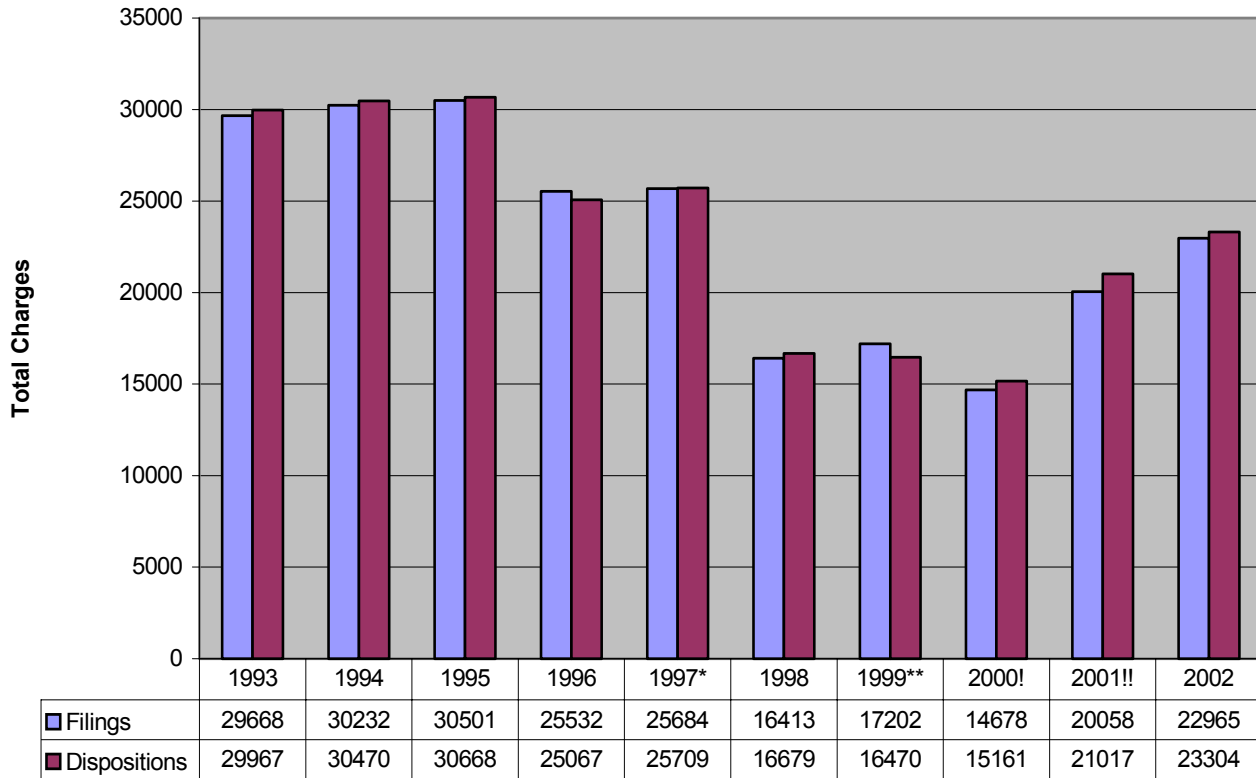
ALDERMAN COURT						
Caseload Comparison - Fiscal Years 2001-2002 - Total Filings						
	2001		2002		Change	% Change
New Castle County						
Newark	11,071		10,413		- 658	- 5.9%
Newport	4,661		4,817		+ 156	+ 3.3%
Sussex County						
Bethany Beach	NA		3,394		+3,394	-----
Delmar	720		447		- 273	-37.9%
Dewey Beach	1,024		1,533		+ 509	+49.7%
Laurel	1,754		1,935		+ 181	+10.3%
Ocean View	0		0		0	-----
Rehoboth Beach	828		426		- 402	-48.6%
State	20,058		22,965		+2,907	+14.5%
Caseload Comparison - Fiscal Years 2001-2002 - Total Dispositions*						
	2001		2002		Change	% Change
New Castle County						
Newark	11,009		10,278		- 731	- 6.6%
Newport	5,267		5,390		+ 123	+ 2.3%
Sussex County						
Bethany Beach	NA		3,394		+3,394	-----
Delmar	877		421		- 456	-52.0%
Dewey Beach	1,024		1,533		+ 509	+49.7%
Laurel	1,916		1,821		- 95	- 5.0%
Ocean View	0		0		0	-----
Rehoboth Beach	924		467		- 457	-49.5%
State	21,017		23,304		+2,287	+10.9%

*The unit of count for criminal and traffic cases is the charge. For example, a defendant with three charges disposed of is counted as three dispositions.

NA = Not Available

Source: Alderman Court, Administrative Office of the Courts.

Alderman Court 10 Year Caseload Trend



Data was unavailable for Newport from 1998-2000 and Bethany Beach was unavailable for 1998-2001. Projections not possible due to unavailability of data for some courts in recent years.

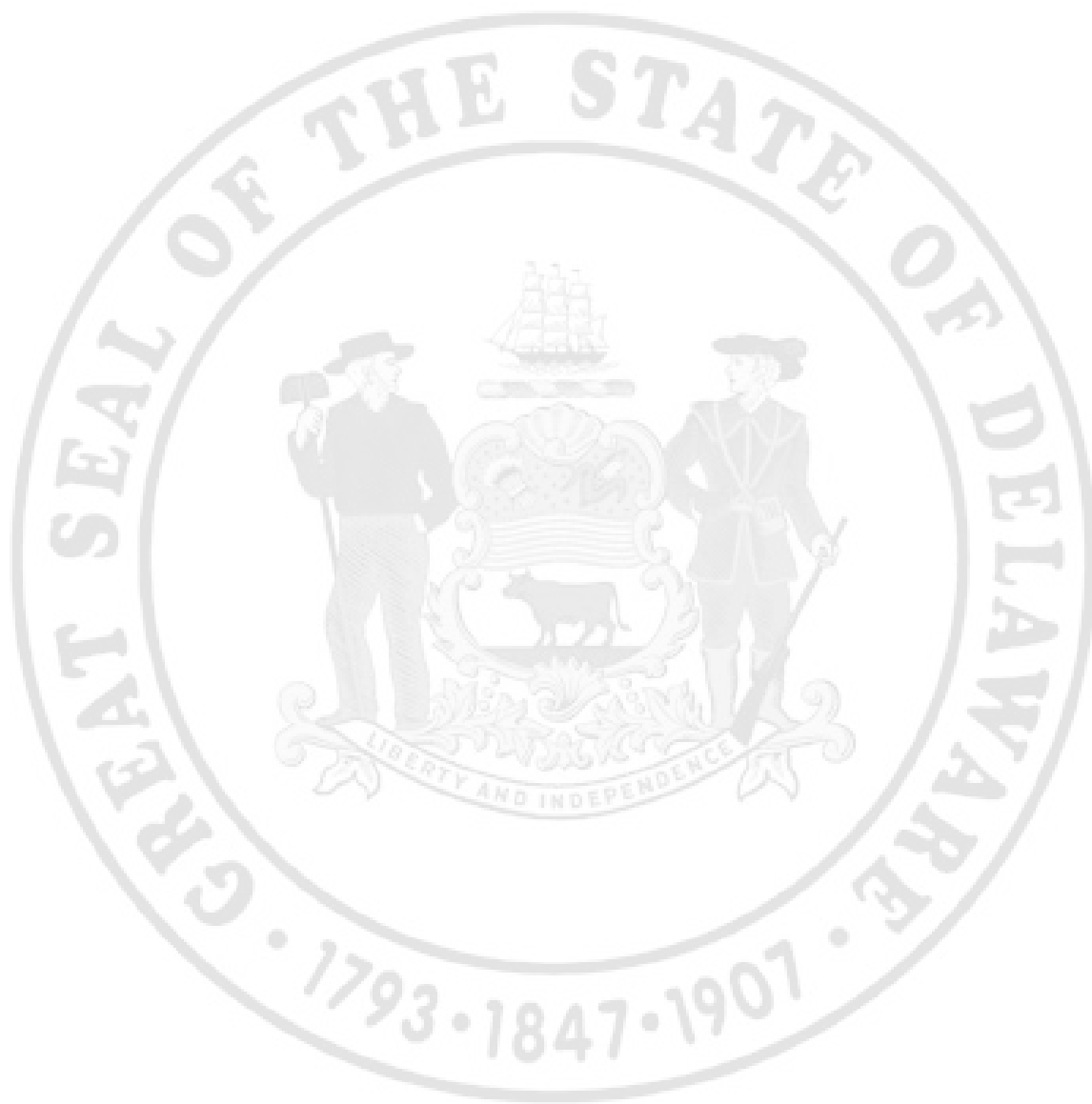
*Filings, dispositions, and pending amended.

**Filings and dispositions amended.

!Dispositions and pending at end of year amended.

!!Pending at end of year amended.

Source: Alderman's Courts; Administrative Office of the Courts.



**Administrative Office of the Courts
500 North King Street, Suite 11600
Wilmington, DE 19801
(302) 255-0090**

courts.state.de.us